

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed October 28, 2003, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-5, 12-14 and 23-32 and objected to Claims 6-11 and 15-22 as being dependent on rejected Claim 1. The Examiner also allowed Claims 33-37. In the present Amendment and Response to Office Action, Applicants have amended Claims 2, 4, 6, 15, 24 and 29 and have cancelled Claims 1, 12-14 and 30-32. Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendments and full consideration of the remarks contained herein.

Allowable Subject Matter and Amendments to the Claims

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for allowing Claims 33-37 and for indicating that dependent Claims 6-11 and 15-22 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In response, Applicants have rewritten Claims 6 and 15 in independent form. Claim 6 now recites all limitations of cancelled base Claim 1 and Claim 15 now recites all the limitations of base Claim 1 and intervening Claims 12-14. In addition, the remainder of Claims 2-5, 7-11, 16-22 and 24-29 now depend from rewritten Claims 6 or 15. Consequently, Applicants respectfully submit that the pending Claims 2-11 and 15-29 are in condition for allowance.

In addition, in light of the amendments to Claims 6 and 15 and of the cancellation of independent Claim 1, dependent Claims 2, 4 and 29 have been amended to depend from Claim 6, rather than cancelled Claim 1. Similarly, dependent Claim 24, originally depending from cancelled Claim 1, has been amended to depend from rewritten Claim 15. Because Applicants have merely incorporated limitations of independent Claim 1 into certain of the dependent claims and have merely changed the dependencies of other claims, Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments add no new matter and are fully supported by the Application as originally filed.

No New Issues

Because the present amendments simply incorporate the previously considered features of independent Claim 1 into formerly dependent Claims 6 and 15, Applicants submit that amendments to these claims raise no new issues. In addition, because Claims 2, 4, 24 and 29 had previously depended from Claim 1 and because amendments to these claims simply change their

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dependencies to claims incorporating all the limitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that these amendments also raise no new issues.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendments.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and § 103

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-5, 12-14 and 23-32 as either being anticipated by Reiss et al. (U.S. Publication 2002/0055801 A1) or as being obvious over Reiss et al. and various secondary references. While Applicants do not acquiesce in the rejections and respectfully submit that the art of record does not render the rejected claims unpatentable, Applicants have nevertheless rewritten the allowable claims in independent form to expedite prosecution of the present Application. Consequently, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections are moot and that the pending claims are allowable over the art of record.

CONCLUSIONS

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants request entry of the amendments and submit that the application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request the same. If some issue remains which the Examiner feels may be addressed by Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is cordially invited to call the undersigned for authorization.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

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